

Message Text

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R 202020Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALEDP

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL POZNAN

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL KRAKOW

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1 LINE 9)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PROP, PFOR

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S LETTER ON RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO
LIBERTY

REF: STATE 224772 (NOTAL)

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1. ON AUGUST 28, SECRETARY KISSINGER SENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO DR. DAVID ABSHIRE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING:

QUOTE: DEAR DAVE:

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING WILL HOLD ITS FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW CONFERENCE OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY PROGRAMMING IN MUNICH LATER THIS MONTH. I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE TO ALL PARTICIPANTS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO THE FREE FLOW AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION THROUGH INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING.

THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, SIGNED BY 35 GOVERNMENTS, DECLARED THAT, "THE PARTICIPAING STATES . . . MAKE IT THEIR AIM TO FACILITATE THE FREER AND WIDER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

OF ALL KINDS," AND THAT "THE PARTICIPATING STATES NOTE THE EXPANSION IN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION BROADCAST BY RADIO, AND EXPRESS THE HOPE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THIS PROCESS, SO AS TO MEET THE INTEREST OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES AND THE AIMS SET FORTH BY THIS CONFERENCE."

RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY BROADCASTS CAN ADMIRABLY SERVE THE STATED AIM OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES "TO FACILITATE THE FREER AND WIDER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION OF ALL KINDS." THE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE, QUALITY REPORTING, AND OBJECTIVE NEWS ANALYSES OF THE BROADCASTS ARE A UNIQUELY MEANINGFUL AND OFTEN VITAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND ENCOURAGE THE "CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE PEOPLES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND THE USSR" MANDATED BY THE BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING ACT OF 1973.

THE "JAMMING" OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTS CONTINUES IN THE SOVIET UNION, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, BULGARIA AND, SPORADICALLY, IN POLAND. IT MUST BE ELIMINATED IF THE GOALS OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT ARE TO BE MET.

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THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CATEGORICALLY REJECTS ALLEGATIONS MADE BY SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN OFFICIALS AND MEDIA THAT RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY CONTRAVENE THE AIMS OF THE HELSINKI DECLARATION, OR THAT EITHER IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. THE RADIOS ARE INDEPENDENT, HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL OPERATIONS WHICH MAKE A VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION

BETWEEN PEOPLES. WARM REGARDS, HENRY A. KISSINGER, UNQUOTE

2. THE LETTER WAS RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT ON AUGUST
30. THE SOVIETS HAVE ATTACKED THE LETTER (IZVESTIA,
SEPT. 8) AND THE EAST EUROPEAN MEDIA HAVE FOLLOWED SUIT.
3. IN AN APPARENTLY UNRELATED EVENT, SWEDISH MEDIA SEPTEMBER
3 AND 4 ASSERTED THAT RFE-SPONSORED PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS
OF EAST EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS TO SWEDEN ARE DESIGNED TO
LOCATE POTENTIAL DEFECTORS. THE SWEDISH COVERAGE ASSERTED
THAT A DIRECT CONNECTION CAN BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN PAST
"CIA SURVEYS" OF POTENTIAL DEFECTORS AND RFE SPONSORED
SURVEYS.

4. FYI. RFE DOES HAVE A CONTRACT WITH THE SWEDISH
INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY FOR INTERVIEWS WITH
EE TRAVELLERS RE THEIR RADIO LISTENING HABITS. THE
RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS ARE PUBLISHED; THE INTERVIEWS
ARE NOT DESIGNED NOR USED TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL DEFECTORS.
RFE HAS HAD SEVERAL SIMILAR CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE POLLS-
TERS IN VARIOUS WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND UNDER

EXISTING LEGISLATION, RFE CAN ENTER INTO SUCH CONTRACTS IN
ANY "OPEN SOCIETY" COUNTRY WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OR US EMBASSIES. END FYI.

5. IN THE EVENT OF INQUIRIES ON THE RFE/RL RELATIONSHIP
TO THE CIA, POSTS SHOULD POINT OUT THAT THE RADIOS' CONNEC-
TION TO THE CIA WAS SEVERED IN 1971, FUNDED THROUGH THE
STATE DEPARTMENT ON AN INTERIM BASIS IN 1972, AND SINCE
1973 THEY HAVE BEEN OPENLY FUNDED AND OPERATED UNDER THE
PROVISIONS OF THE BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING
ACT. YOU MAY DRAW ON SUBSTANCE OF SECRETARY'S LETTER
TO ABSHIRE IN RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES.

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6. FOR NATO: IN POLADS, YOU SHOULD PASS TO ALLIES TEXT
OF LETTER. YOU SHOULD NOTE THAT LETTER WAS MADE PUBLIC
AS A STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE ON AUGUST 30, AND
THAT IT HAS EVOKED CONSIDERABLE CRITICAL COMMENT IN THE
SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN MEDIA. ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

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